



## ICELAND TO GREENLAND: MOUNTAINS, GLACIERS AND THE WESTFJORDS EXPEDITION CRUISE

Our 15-day Iceland to Greenland: Mountains, Glaciers and the Westfjords itinerary explores iconic destinations in Iceland and Greenland. In the seldom-visited Westfjords of Iceland--"Iceland's best-kept secret"--you'll get to explore the rugged peninsula that's renowned for its fjords, towering mountains, bird-dwelling cliffs, gushing waterfalls and rolling green hills. Before leaving Iceland, you will also have an opportunity to visit the private island sanctuary of Vigur--which is home to 7,000 eider ducks and 100,000 puffins. In East Greenland, after sailing the length of Ikerasassuaq (Prins Christian Sund), we'll immerse ourselves in spectacular glaciers, mountainous landscapes, culturally-rich communities, and Nuuk, the capital of Greenland. Together we'll explore--by ship, Zodiac, kayak and on foot--some of the longest fjords in Greenland, such as Eternity, Kangerlussuaq and Tasermiut. With the help of expert guides, you will also get to learn about Norse and Viking cultures, traditional Icelandic ways of life, as well as contemporary Greenlandic customs in cities such as Nuuk.



### ITINERARY

Day 1 - Arrive in Reykjavik, Iceland

Arrive at the international airport in Keflavik and transfer independently to your included hotel in Reykjavik. Depending on your arrival time, you may wish to explore Iceland's fascinating capital. Many cultural and historical landmarks are located in or



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near the walkable city center.

### Day 2 - Embarkation

Enjoy your complimentary breakfast at the hotel. Your transfer to the ship is scheduled for the afternoon, leaving you time to explore Reykjavik in the morning and have lunch on your own before you rendez-vous back at the hotel for the bus transfer to the port. Embarkation is scheduled for 4 pm. You'll be notified of official welcome and safety briefings as we set sail for the Westfjords.

### Day 3 - Exploring Westfjords, Iceland's Hidden Gems

Each region of Iceland has its own appeal for nature seekers, birding enthusiasts and history-lovers, and the seldom-visited Westfjords, where the land meets the sea in the most dramatic fashion, is no exception. Often referred to as "Iceland's best-kept secret," this rugged peninsula at the country's remote northwestern tip is rife with fjords, and mountains that slope gracefully down to the sea. We spend our time exploring the fjords and shores of Iceland's oldest region, enjoying its kaleidoscope of diverse land and seascapes. Here, tumbling cliffs and gushing waterfalls alternate with colorful beaches, and rolling green hills lead up to high moorlands dotted with rocky outcrops, small lakes, and the occasional shaggy Icelandic sheep or pony grazing in the distance. A few modest outposts of civilization, in the form of small fishing communities nestled along the fjords and shores of the Denmark Strait, face out into the mighty Atlantic--keeping alive a maritime heritage that dates back to the Viking days.

One of today's highlights is a chance to visit Vigur, a private island that provides guests with unique opportunities to delve into Icelandic culture and heritage as early as the 11th century.

Vigur is widely regarded as a capsule of Icelandic heritage." Upon arriving on shore by Zodiac, we will be welcomed by the people who own this incredible island. One of the co-owners is polar explorer Felicity Aston, the first woman to ski solo across Antarctica. You'll learn about the Icelandic tradition of eiderdown harvesting, and the wide array of Arctic birdlife and seals that are found in Vigur. It's estimated that the island is home to over 7,000 breeding ducks, 100,000 puffins, Europe's largest colony of black Guillemot, and huge flocks of Arctic terns. You'll also have opportunities to ramble about the island, taste local food and visit the island cafe. Today's adventure options include Zodiac cruising, sea kayaking, paddle excursion program, and, potentially, a guided shore hike. Right across the bay is Mongufoss, one of Iceland's most remote and beautiful waterfalls, which we'll visit by ship after our onboard lunch.

### Days 4 and 5 - At Sea: Crossing the Denmark Strait

As we sail southwest across the Denmark Strait toward Greenland, your Expedition Team will prepare you for the exciting adventures ahead--both on and off-ship. Our team of polar experts will present on a wide range of topics, including the geology, wildlife, climatology and enthralling history of Greenland. The team will also search for (and identify) the seabirds soaring about the ship--and they'll most certainly alert you whenever there's a whale sighting.

### Days 6 to 10 - Exploring Southeast Greenland

Your exploration of Greenland begins with East Greenland, one of the least-visited and most remote parts of the world's largest island. Our journey along the coast will be influenced by weather and ice conditions, with each day--and each off-ship excursion--presenting new adventures. Expect glaciers, steep mountains and breathtaking fjords.





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Transiting the 100-km long Prins Christian Sund (Ikerasassuaq)--one of the world's most scenic fjords--will reveal incredible views. Guests can expect dramatic mountain and seascapes with glaciers tumbling down to the sea, and captivating vistas stretching along the entire fjord. The South Greenlanders who live on this frontier are as unique as the region they inhabit. This is where the migrating hunting people from the east eventually settled around the European trading posts.

The handful of villages in this region are renowned for their inhabitants' strong commitment to traditional hunting and fishing practices. We hope to visit Aappilattoq, perched on the shores of Prins Christian Sund (Ikerasassuaq), to introduce you to some of our local partners, listen to their stories, hear their music, taste local food, learn about the fishing and hunting heritage, and perhaps even join a friendly game of soccer--as a player or spectator.

If you are looking for the most iconic peaks of South Greenland, you'll be in your glory when we reach Tasermiut Fjord in the heart of what's known as "Arctic Patagonia." We'll offer Zodiac excursions and guided on-shore hikes (tailored for different levels of ability and interest) to view the jagged peaks, tumbling glaciers, ice-laden landscapes, alpine vistas and wildlife. Tasermiut Fjord is ideal for our sea kayaking and paddling programs, as well.

We continue on our quest to explore the wild fjords of the uninhabited southeast coast, one of which is Lindenow Fjord,

also known by its Greenlandic name, Kangerlussuaq. Thousands of years ago, groups of Paleo-Inuit hunters and fish harvesters settled in these isolated fjords, living off the land, and surviving on food from the sea. This preceded the arrival of European explorers and the establishment of settlements which prompted one of the biggest waves of migration in Greenland.

Marine mammals frequent the many fjords in this region. Humpback whales are often observed in the shallow waters at the entrance to the fjords where nutrients are drawn up to the surface. Rare sightings of polar bears are possible as they drift down from the north on sea ice floes propelled by the EastGreenland current. We'll keep our eyes peeled for other wildlife as we continue to explore the remote icescapes of the wild southeast, which is also ideal for hiking, paddle excursions, Zodiac cruises and shore landings.

The southern coast of Greenland is steeped in Norse history. We anticipate a visit to Hvalsey (Qaortukuloq), the site of Greenland's largest and best-preserved Norse ruins. Exploring the remains of the church (circa 14th century) will make you feel like you're stepping back in time, as the building appears much as it did when it was abandoned in the 15th century. The surrounding fells and fjords remain similarly untouched.

Also on our planned itinerary is charming Qassiarsuk, one of the five sites that make up the Kujataa World Heritage Site. It's a small sheep farming settlement where you can experience true South Greenland hospitality and gain insight into the fascinating lives of sheep farmers living at the edge of the massive Greenland Ice Sheet. We suggest you take time to explore the remains and replicas of Brattahlíð, Erik the Red's estate, once



the epicenter of the Greenland Norse Eastern Settlement. During or time in Qassiarsuk, guests will have opportunities to sample local food, enjoy a hike, and, if time and weather allow, we may take a Zodiac cruise amidst towering icebergs.

#### Day 11 - At Sea

As our ship makes its way up the coast from South Greenland, we set our sights on the endless natural wonders--and small communities-- along the rugged west coast of Greenland. We invite you to use this time to attend one of the expert-led polar presentations to learn more about this region of Greenland.

#### Days 12 and 13 - Venturing Into West Greenland

The sheer beauty of West Greenland can overwhelm first-time visitors: spectacular glaciers, mountainous landscapes, and thriving, culturally-rich communities. As we head north, we hope to embark on Zodiac daily excursions to explore local bays, channels and select landing sites. We'll also explore some of the quaint settlements throughout the picturesque islands and fjords.

Nuuk, the charming Greenlandic capital, is a must-visit destination on the west coast. You'll have time to wander the streets of the historic Old Nuuk neighborhood and see the Hans Egede Church and Hans Egede statue near the waterfront, both named after the 18th-century missionary who founded the settlement. History buffs will make haste to the national museum to view the famous Greenlandic mummies, which were found under a rock outcrop in 1972. The remarkably preserved mummies of six women and two children date back to the 15th century.

Pride of place for our seasoned expedition team is Eternity Fjord,

which is home to the tallest mountains in all of West Greenland. This a favorite spot for us to launch our Zodiacs into the water to explore in-depth--where larger vessels can't navigate. There are few settlements in this long fjord--but you will quickly appreciate nature in its rawest form as you hike among the towering mountains, and photograph the colorful tundra and other dramatic landscapes.

#### Day 14 - Exploring Kangerlussuaq and Disembarkation

Today we'll explore 50 km (31 miles) above the Arctic Circle. Our destination is Kangerlussuaq, which is Greenlandic for "the long fjord." At the end of this 180-km long fjord is a settlement bearing the same name. Fishing boats based in the town of Kangerlussuaq sail the full length of the fjord to access the ocean. The town is known for its stunning natural beauty-- and for being the home of the largest airport in Greenland.

You will be ferried from ship to shore on one last Zodiac ride, then transferred to the airport where you will board your charter flight to Iceland's Keflavik International Airport, approximately 45 minutes from Reykjavik. Upon arrival at the airport, you will be transferred to your included hotel for the night.

#### Day 15 - Departing Iceland

After breakfast in your included hotel in Reykjavik, transfer independently to the Keflavik International Airport for your onward journey.

#### Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.





## YOUR SHIP: OCEAN EXPLORER

**YOUR SHIP:** Ocean Explorer

**VESSEL TYPE:**

**LENGTH:**

**PASSENGER CAPACITY:**

**BUILT/REFURBISHED:**

Ocean Explorer is a modern ship, elegant and purpose-built for polar exploration. The 138-passenger vessel has been designed with the latest in expedition ship technology. One of the ship's key features is the ULSTEIN X-BOW®, a marine engineering innovation that ensures a comfortable and smooth sailing experience thanks to the inverted bow. Located at the bow is the two-story, light-filled library, which introduces a welcome airiness to the expedition ship. Spacious cabins feature a modern, bespoke Scandinavian design and almost all have verandas. Guests can relax and find comfort in the spacious gym, sauna with large windows, and two outdoor Jacuzzis. Ocean Explorer features ample outdoor viewing areas and multi-height outer decks, which are ideal for long-view photography and wildlife viewing. The vessel is equipped with a fleet of 15 Zodiacs that enable guests to get off the ship quickly and safely for off-ship adventures. In addition to the well-appointed and spacious public areas, Ocean Explorer has an industry-leading mix of sustainability systems, including fuel-efficient Rolls Royce engines. Two Story Library Light-filled interior library--at the bow of the ship-- allows guests to sit and relax indoors while taking in the surrounding polar landscapes

from their choice of two levels. Leading Edge Sustainability With the latest sustainability technology in polar expedition, the ship features fuel-efficient Rolls-Royce engines and the ground-breaking MAGS gasification system that converts waste into energy, eliminating the environmental impact of waste transportation. ULSTEIN X-Bow In addition to forming the double-story library, the innovative X-Bow design ensures calm, energy-efficient sailing in rough waters. High Observation Outdoor Decks Observation areas on Decks 7 and 8 allow for higher, longer-view landscape photography while contending with less sea spray. Quiet and Comfortable Spacious and luxurious cabins ensure your quiet ambience with no sound disturbance from adjoining cabins--and almost all cabins feature a balcony for outdoor viewing. Stunning Interior Design Each interior element was carefully hand-picked by designers for you to enjoy, from the dramatic two-story forward lounge, the floor-to-ceiling glass refuge in the library, to the grand fixtures and luxe furnishings throughout the ship. Main Dining Room Contemporary meets cozy in this modern dining room with its stylish lighting and contemporary art. Located on Deck 5, the Main Dining Room seats 144 guests, and features expansive floor-to-ceiling windows that open onto the spectacular polar wilderness. Private Dining Room Tasteful and intimate. This stylish, private dining room on deck 5 provides a relaxed dining experience--with views of the polar landscape--for up to 36 guests. The Latitude Bar A popular social hub on Deck 5, the beautifully-lit Latitude Bar--with its lush sofas and faux marble-topped end tables--is large enough to seat 46 and is ideal for enjoying a quiet drink on your own or hanging out with



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friends. Library Located on Deck 6 at the top of the gorgeous atrium staircase, this beautiful Library with floor-to-ceiling glass, accommodates up to 47 people Dry Sauna After a day of exciting off-ship adventure, guests can relax on the sauna's traditional wood benches while gazing at the polar wilderness just outside the large sauna windows. Accommodates 15 people on Deck 7. Fitness Center Stay fit with the latest work-out equipment in the Fitness Center on Deck 7. Jacuzzis Two outdoor Jacuzzis on deck 7, at the ship's stern, mean you can relax alfresco while soaking up the breath-taking polar views. Observation Lounge This stylish lounge at the top of the ship guarantees incredible views. Guests also frequent this spacious lookout on Deck 8 to enjoy cocktails and conversation with fellow



travelers.

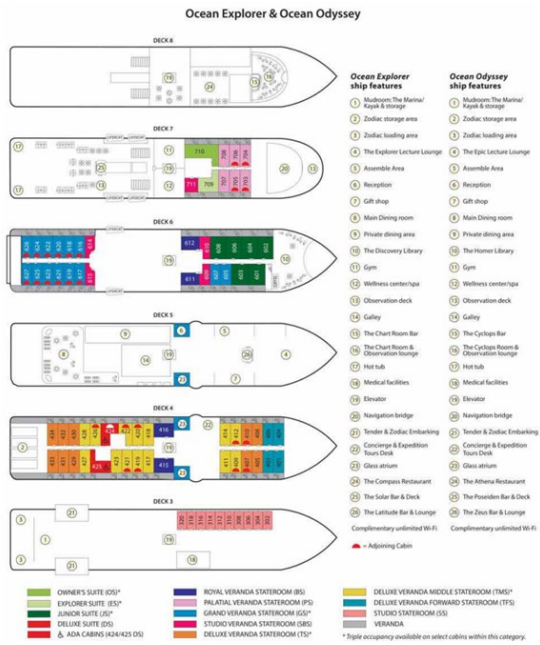




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